Communitas

MVCC Faculty/Staff Newsletter

Week of October 8, 2012

# LGBTQ&A workshop builds understanding and civility

The College continued its mission of promoting civility and tolerance for cultural, ethnic, sexual, religious, ability, and other forms of diversity with a workshop last week on issues of importance to LGBTQ&A (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Queer or Questioning and Allied) people. The workshop was facilitated by Amit Taneja - Director of the Days-Massolo Center at Hamilton College – who fostered dialogue among the more than 50 members of the college community in attendance.

**CREATING UNDERSTANDING -** Amit Taneja - Director of the Days-Massolo Center at Hamilton College - talks about how acceptance is the first step toward understanding.

Taneja, who holds a Bachelor of Art in Psychology from University of British Columbia and a Master's degree in College Student Personnel from Bowling Green State University, opened the session by laying out ground rules which made the work move along smoothly. These included: Offering affirmation; agree to disagree; confidentiality; and let everyone have a voice.

Next the ice was broke by everyone introducing themselves and why they came to this workshop. Taneja used the SWOT analysis to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that exist on campus for LGBT students and employees.

"There is not one LGBT community," said Taneja. "There are many different intersections of the way people perceive and view themselves. One person may find the campus environment is safe while another may feel threatened."

Taneja went on to explain these apprehensions exist on all college campuses, but the goal is to recognize how individuals and groups are feeling and to make it a non-judgmental zone.

The audience was broken into groups of 10-12 with each being assigned to highlight the SWOT of MVCC's campus environment. It was found that MVCC is moving in the right direction with the DGV initiative, Civility Hall, Gay-Straight Alliance Club and the College's diversity.

The workshop pointed out where the College is weak such as derogatory statements from students and staff, perception that MVCC is trailing other colleges, lack of involvement in GSA Club, and lack of understanding and events for people with different identities.

After these two categories were reviewed, some of the opportunities discovered for MVCC include working to change the Oneida County community's perception, utilizing the resources which already exist to promote understanding of LGBT and expansion of workshops such as this one to encourage acceptance.

"It is about the college community taking that first step," said Taneja, who went on to say he was encouraged by the large number of senior administrators who were in attendance at the workshop.

# Help name MVCC's new Hawk mascot

MVCC will be unveiling a brand new Hawk mascot at its upcoming Midnight Madness, next Thursday Oct. 18, at 9 p.m. in the Jorgensen Athletic and Event Center.

To celebrate the "hatching" there is a new Facebook contest to give the Hawk a proper name. The winner will receive a new iPad.

Students, faculty, and staff are invited to visit Facebook.com/WeAreMVCC, "like" the page, and suggest names for the new mascot. A panel from Athletics, Marketing, the MVCC Foundation and Student Affairs will review entries and select the winning name, and anyone who submitted that name via Facebook will be entered in a drawing to win a new iPad.

The contest ends Oct. 17 and the prize will be awarded in November. For contest rules and to play see us on Facebook at Facebook.com/WeAreMVCC.

Help us celebrate Hawk Pride and be entered to win today – and be sure to see the new mascot unveiled on Oct. 18!

# Congressman recognizes work of Utica GEAR UP

With the College's Utica GEAR UP program entering its first full year of service to the Utica City School District, the program was honored with a proclamation from U.S. Congressman Richard L. Hanna naming the second week of September as Utica GEAR UP Week.

GEAR UP is an acronym for a federal grant titled "Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs." These grants provide a grade of low-income students with the support and resources they need to reach college despite the challenges faced in their communities and home life. These grants have been available for more than a decade helping millions of students in 43 states reach post-secondary education.

Rep. Hanna's proclamation recognized how "Utica GEAR UP is working toward improving attendance, grades, standardized test scores, and student promotion into regular and advanced classes, increasing communication among parents, the school and GEAR UP, and developing relationships within the community. Tutoring and mentoring seventh grade students is at the forefront of these efforts."

The Utica GEAR UP program began last year by targeting the sixth grade – now seventh graders – from JFK and Donovan middle schools and will offer all of these aforementioned services to this group of students through graduation. Utica GEAR UP is working with more than 690 students offering comprehensive mentoring to some 695 students, of which nearly 247 received tutoring and homework assistance and more than 429 have taken advantage of the career counseling workshops.

**CONGRESSIONAL PROCLAMATION –** The staff of Utica GEAR UP was presented a Congressional Proclamation from Congressman Richard L. Hanna's office marking the second week of September as Utica GEAR UP Week. Presenting the proclamation was Linda Lambe, representing Congressman Richard Hanna, far left. From left are Patrick Mangino, GEAR UP Youth Academic Specialist; Linda Tettamant, GEAR UP Coordinator; Todd Kubica, GEAR UP Director; Jessica Woolheater, GEAR UP Youth Academic Specialist; Salina Billins, GEAR UP Youth Academic Specialist; Douglas Higgins, GEAR UP Data Specialist; Carolyn Rutledge, GEAR UP Office Specialist.

The proclamation resolved, "that I and the Congress of the United States join all in congratulating Utica GEAR UP for impacting the children of our community. I wish the students, parents, mentors, tutors, and staff the best continued success and look forward to Utica GEAR UP changing the future of Central New York for generations to come."

# Plescia: We are leading a movement

As part of the Teaching Fellowship initiative at MVCC, Cheryl Plescia has dedicated her time to exploring and researching teaching and interactive methods which will lead to better student success at the College.

**Plescia**

As part of her work, she joined David Katz - Employee Enrichment Coordinator and Professor of Political Science – at the National Lilly Conference on College and University Teaching in Traverse City, Michigan from September 20-23. The theme of the conference was "evidence based teaching and learning" and the three full days of workshops reflected that emphasis with great flair and focus.

"The wonderful thing about this conference was its size," said Plescia, Associate Professor of Psychology and Human Services. "I have attended larger conferences where you don't get the interaction with the presenters. Because they limited the attendance of each workshop to 25-30 people, there was a lot of interaction which sparked enlightened conversations."

Katz presented an interactive workshop on "Emotional Intelligence, Efficacy and Student Success" to a packed room of educators working at colleges and universities from all over the country.

There was a lot of talk of the role of brain research in shaping the pedagogical approaches toward creating a vibrant and productive learning environment in classrooms, labs, theaters, athletic fields, counseling offices and learning centers.

"I was very impressed with the consistently good quality of the presentations. In most cases the presenters practiced what they preached. … I learned a lot of things I am excited to share with my colleagues here at MVCC," said Katz.

"After learning what other colleges and universities are doing, I see there is a lot good teaching methods already being applied on this campus," said Plescia. "When I go to conferences like these, I come away feeling validated on the work we are doing right here at MVCC."

Both Plescia and Katz both said that the College should be celebrating and highlighting what is already being done correctly at MVCC and that these conferences enable them to bring other new innovative ideas back to the campus for faculty and staff enrichment programs.

"I came away realizing that we are leading a movement that is happening across the country. With experimental learning, coming up with creative ways to support students, service learning, learning communities and much more," said Plescia. "These are some things that are just being introduced elsewhere but we are right there with the movement. We need to keep moving forward."

# Rogues' Revenge Renaissance Festival

The Utica Campus was overrun by pirates, Gypsies, fairies, aristocrats and groundlings as MVCC hosted the Rogues' Revenge Renaissance Festival on Saturday and Sunday, September 29-30.

There was loads of activity including the infamous and eye-catching Adamo Ignus fire performing group, known for fire-breathing while on broken glass and beds of nails.

The celebrated Bard of Avon, William Shakespeare himself, was present with a rousing performance on his view of the world which included exhilarating audience participation.

Also on hand was Ophelia's Looking Glass, the two talented and aesthetically over-achieving sisters with a flair for Gothic-inspired music.

The festival also featured Eyes-of-Isis, a belly dance troupe, and the entire cast of the Merely Players of Upstate New York acting as the aristocrats of this fair as well as the rabblement who get their revenge with class warfare.

Sunday's entertainment featured the Morris Dancers performing a medieval dance from the British Isles. Strolling throughout the grounds was puppeteer Alice C.W. Dennis, and her (huge) pet dragon Arf.

There was something for everyone as many of the visitors joined into the fun by dressing in period garb.

# New Faces @ MVCC

Joyce Kapral joins MVCC's faculty as an instructor teaching Nursing classes.

Kapral

This Canastota resident holds a Master of Science in Nursing from the State University of New York Health Science Center at Upstate Medical University, and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the State University of New York Institute of Technology at Utica/Rome.

Prior to coming to MVCC, Kapral worked as a nurse manager for the Research Foundation of SUNY at Oneida Oncology for over 10 years. Her experience also includes being a clinical nurse specialist at St. Joseph's Hospital.

Her experience in the classroom includes earning Assistant Professor rank at SUNY Morrisville and Clinical Associate and Examiner for the Excelsior College's School of Nursing.

**ADVICE ON THE FUTURE -** MVCC student Laura Gerhardt talks with Keuka College admissions representative Kim Morgan during the annual Fall Transfer Fair held on Tuesday in the Alumni College Center.

# Transfer Fair attracts record number of 4-year institutions

The College hosted its annual Fall Transfer Fair on Tuesday with a record number of four-year colleges and universities attending.

This year's event featured more than 75 private and SUNY institutions from throughout the Northeast. MVCC worked in conjunction with Herkimer County Community College, which hosted its transfer fair in the morning, and MVCC held its fair in the afternoon when the largest number of students are on campus.

"This worked out exceptionally well," said Mike Henningsen, Coordinator of Transfer Services. "Because Herkimer was in the morning, many of these enrollment counselors were able to make one trip and hit two colleges. Many of them operate on tight budgets, so this was ideal for them."

With so many institutions involved, the transfer fair was expanded to include Room 116 of the Alumni College Center as well as the MV Commons. To better direct students, all of the SUNY institutions were located together in room 116.

**PROTECT THE BALL -** The Hawks' Meghan Gaffney works to protect the ball from a Bryant & Stratton defender en route to an 11-0 victory last week. The women's soccer team is ranked nationally. Gaffney is a sophomore midfielder.

# Women's soccer adds two more victories

**By David J. Warren**
**Assistant to the Director of Athletics**

The Women's Soccer Team continued its winning ways with two victories last week over Hudson Valley Community College and Bryant and Stratton College, respectively. The Hawks remain ranked No. 3 in the NJCAA national poll with an overall record of 13-1-1. The women play two tough games on the road this week at SUNY Delhi and Onondaga CC.

The Women's Cross Country Team is ranked No. 1 in the NJCAA national poll. Leading the way for the Hawks has been Sara Rifendifer and Andrea Szewczyk. The Hawks are gearing up for the conference meet which will take place on Saturday, October 20, hosted by North Country Community College.

The Men's Cross Country Team carries a No. 5 NJCAA National ranking into this week. The most impressive runner for the Hawks has been Tom Arcuri. Arcuri has yet to be beaten by any other two-year college runner this year. Next up for MVCC is the conference meet at North Country CC on October 20.

The Women's Volleyball Team has been improving steadily all year long. The Hawks host Fulton Montgomery CC this week before travelling to a Pod Tournament at SUNY Delhi on Saturday.

The Men's Soccer Team split a pair of Region III contests last week. The Hawks defeated Hudson Valley CC, 2-0, and dropped a 3-0 decision to Adirondack CC. The Hawks have a current record of 8-6 this season. MVCC hosts SUNY Delhi and Broome CC this week.

The Women's Tennis Team finished up their regular season last week. MVCC No. 1 singles player Leylee Tayefeh is 7-1 this year. She will lead the Hawks into Regionals this weekend at SUNY Delhi.

Questions/Comments please contact Dave Warren at 792-5674.

## Athlete of the Week

**The women's cross country team continues to be the powerhouse of two-year colleges on the national level. Leading the pack for the Hawks last week was Sara Rifendifer as she turned a personal best during the Hamilton College Invitational with a time of 20 minutes, 56.3 seconds.**

**Rifendifer**

**For this performance, Rifendifer was named MVCC's Athlete of the Week for the week ending October 7, 2012.**

**The women's cross country team has not lost to a two-year college squad this season and is currently ranked number one in the National Junior College Athletic Association's national poll.**

**Rifendifer is a sophomore Fine Arts major who graduated from Oneida High School.**

**REMEMBERING THOSE WHO HAVE DO SO MUCH –** The College hosted a reception for the Plumley family to unveil the new signage on the outside of the John D. Plumley Science and Technology Complex on the Rome Campus. These have been many upgrades and renovations to the building over the last several years including identifying the building to passersby on Floyd Avenue. Attending the unveiling from the Plumley family were Joel Plumley, Helen Plumley, John (Jack) D. Plumley, Judy Plumley and Jim Plumley. They were greeted by MVCC's Dean of the Rome Campus, Dr. Richard Quest. The Plumley family are commited to the Rome community, MVCC and higher education.